



## WHY WHENUA MATTERS

Our whenua is our tūrangawaewae, our place to stand. It connects us to our whānau, our ancestors and to our future generations.

In recent times, for many of us, the connection to our whenua has been damaged, or lost. Most of us don't live on our whenua anymore — we might not even know where it is.

It can take a lot of mahi to connect to our whenua and to bring it back to what it once was. But the mahi is worth it, because the whenua can enrich our lives.



## IT CONNECTS US

Building a connection to our whenua lets us be a part of something bigger than ourselves. Acting as a kaitiaki for the whenua can help us bring our whānau closer together, both physically and spiritually. It reminds us of the importance of whakapapa, and the connections between our tūpuna and future generations. It's not something that happens overnight.

Connecting to our whenua takes passion and perseverance — it's one step at a time. But, with each step we take, our mahi will inspire others in the whānau to start their journey back to the whenua too. When we have our whenua, we know our people and our place.





## **IT IMPROVES OUR WELLBEING**

Our whenua is intrinsically linked to our wellbeing. When the whenua thrives, the whānau thrives.


The relationship between whenua and whānau is part of our traditional way of living a sustainable and balanced life, where the health and wellbeing of the collective was the focus of the community.



## IT STRENGTHENS OUR IDENTITY

Having a place to stand or tūrangawaewae is a fundamental part of our identity as Māori. It is often related to the lands we trace our whakapapa back to.

Being able to walk on the land that your ancestors walked on helps strengthen the connection to who you are — it connects you to your whakapapa and helps you understand who you are and how you came to be.



## IT CAN NOURISH US

Whenua is the place we are nourished — physically by the food that grows and lives there, emotionally by the aroha of the whānau that connect there, and spiritually by the mauri, the life-force.

When the whenua is thriving, there can also be potential for financial support too. Not all whenua has money-making potential but some does, especially when it has good governance and people with passion.



## IT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY

There is so little whenua Māori in Aotearoa now, it is our responsibility to protect what is left. It was here before us, it will be here long after us, and it gives us so much.



Whatungarongaro te tangata  
toitū te whenua.  
As man disappears from sight,  
the land remains.



